# CENTRAL March 2024 OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH NEWSLETTER —

What's On?

ANTI RACISM CELENDAR EASTER AND HOLY WEEK

MIRACLE CELEBRATION SACRIFICE

LOVE

Send in your photos and news for the upcoming editions of our Newsletter.



MARCH 2024



#### SUNDAY WORSHIP

Worship together on Sundays at 10am - 721 Bernard Ave, Kelowna Zoom and Facebook Live options available.

#### **CONTACT ADMIN**

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MAIL TO: PO BOX 24042, KELOWNA BC, V1Y 9H2

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CENTRALOKANAGANUNITEDCHURCH.COM

## Church News What's Happening this month.

#### MARCH AT A GLANCE

- Continuing Anti-Racism in Lent
- Celtic Educational Workshops begin
- Easter Dinner March 23rd
- Holy Week & Easter
- Jazz Vespers March 3rd @5:15pm





#### Covid19, Flu Season & Illness:

Please stay home if you feel unwell, or have been exposed recently. There are masks available in church if you need one. Please wash your hands frequently and use sanitizer when eating or drinking and practice social distance.

Let's work to keep each other safe!



#### SUBMISSIONS

Please have your news, articles and photos in by the 21st of the month to delainec@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com to be included in the next month's Newsletter.

Please submit weekly E-Letter news to Tanya tanyap@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com



MAIL TO: PO BOX 24042, KELOWNA BC, V1Y 9H2









### HERE IS A LIST OF WHAT IS IN THIS MONTH'S NEWSLETTER!

- Welcome to Spring!
- Photos of our Affirming service from February
- March Events, Holy Week & Easter Details
- Stewardship, Donations and Grocery program
- General COUC notices







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My family and I are so very thankful for all of the kindnesses shared with us over the time of my father's illness and passing. We are held in your love, in the warm expressions of support, the cards and letters and offerings of food and other forms of assistance.

It is now almost four weeks since Dad died. Sometimes that feels like yesterday, sometimes last year. Thankyou, again, for all you've done and continue to do to help us at this time. It means a great deal to all of us, and to me most especially.

Thank you, Keith

# What is to be Done?

Palestine and Israel

What's to be done? People continue to die by the hundreds and thousands in Gaza and have their villages stolen from them in the West Bank. Palestinian cities, like Bethlehem, are ringed in and under siege. Israeli citizens feel themselves to be under threat and see no end in sight under their current government. The days of peace building seem long gone and past redemption. Our government won't even stop arms shipments to Israel, as called for by our church. What can we do?



We can check out the United Church of Canada web site for actions of support and advocacy through the QR Code below.

We can help Rabbi David Mivasair of Independent Jewish Voices get funds directly to people living at risk in Gaza through the QR Code below, or by connecting to him through his facebook page.

Personally, I've stopped buying anything from Israel. I don't want to support what their government is doing in Palestine. I hope they will change and I can support them again. - Keith



UCC Support Justice & Advocacy

#### Help Gaza Families





#### THE UNITED CHURCH OF CANADA

3250 Bloor St. West, Suite 200 Toronto, Ontario M8X 2Y4 Canada



#### L'ÉGLISE UNIE DU CANADA

416-231-5931 1-800-268-3781 F: 416-231-3103 united-church.ca

February 5, 2024

Central Okanagan United Church 721 Bernard Ave. Kelowna, BC V1Y 6P6

Dear Friends of Central Okanagan United Church,

I'm sorry that I'm not able to be with you in person, as you gather to celebrate becoming an Affirming Ministry. This is a wonderful day for you, and for the whole United Church of Canada, as you proudly and publicly celebrate the full participation of people of diverse sexual orientations and gender identities/expressions in the life and work of your ministry.

For a long time, the United Church of Canada has believed that a vital part of following Jesus' Way is to recognize that every person is a beloved child of God, and is deserving of respect and inclusion. It has taken us almost as long a time to move that understanding from our thinking to our living. As individuals, and as a community of faith, you have started that hard work of becoming more inclusive – through study, self-reflection, exploration of mission and ministry, and discerning the Holy Spirit's nudging. In coming to this day, you've committed yourselves to continue to the joyful work of recognizing the space that Christ has made at the table, and making sure that all who wish to sit there are welcome participants in the feast!

I am singing and dancing, "Alleluia, thanks be to God," for each and every one of you, today. Through and in your ministry, Jesus' work of justice and healing continues, not just this day, but into the future.

I hope that you are celebrating well! In becoming an Affirming Ministry, you have taken another step, and helped the wider United Church of Canada take another step, on our journey of faithful witness and service.

Almost five hundred years ago, a sister in faith, St. Theresa of Avila, wrote, "Christ has no body but yours; no hands, no feet on earth but yours. Yours are the eyes with which he looks compassion on this world, yours are the feet with which he walks to do good. Yours are the hands, with which he blesses all the world..." Thanks be to God that you are Christ's body, blessing the world with compassion and wonder and hope for all.

In celebration,

The Right Reverend Dr. Carmen Lansdowne

Moderator / Modératrice

Camen Lemsdowne

The United Church of Canada / L'Église Unie du Canada











## Becoming an Anti-racism & De-colonizing Community of Faith

#### A Lenten Practice to Engage With

Throughout the 40 days of Lent, we will be focusing on De-colonization and Anti-racism. Yes, the two do indeed go hand in hand.

What do we say, or not say, to a racialized person?
As a racialized person, how do I respond to the challenges this presents?
How does our place in society reflect colonization and why does it matter?
What steps can we take to assist in breaking through the injustices?

These are all key questions to be asking ourselves and wrestling with. Believe it or not, Jesus and the Prophets wrestled with ones a lot like them. What did being a 'chosen person' mean? Who spoke truth to wealth and power? What happened? The United Church of Canada, General Council has provided us with some excellent stories, insights and wisdom to help us along our way. We encourage you to join the journey.

Each day through lent, you can go to this link and find resources to help you reflect on various aspects of anti-racism and decolonization. You are invited to read one a day and spend a little time in reflection. Jot down your thoughts and question and be ready to discuss them over coffee time in a very informal setting.

https://united-church.ca/social-action/justice-initiatives/anti-racism/40-days-engagement-anti-racism?page=3

Additionally, you may be interested in checking out this UCC YouTube channel, that offers 10 – 1-1.5 hour videos, taking us deeper into the thought process.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PLQDu-SgFb3RiN\_gGoifleG5rscJ16ECow

We hope you will join us on the Lenten practice, so that we, at Central Okanagan United Church, but actively seek to be an anti-racist, de-colonizing Community of Faith.

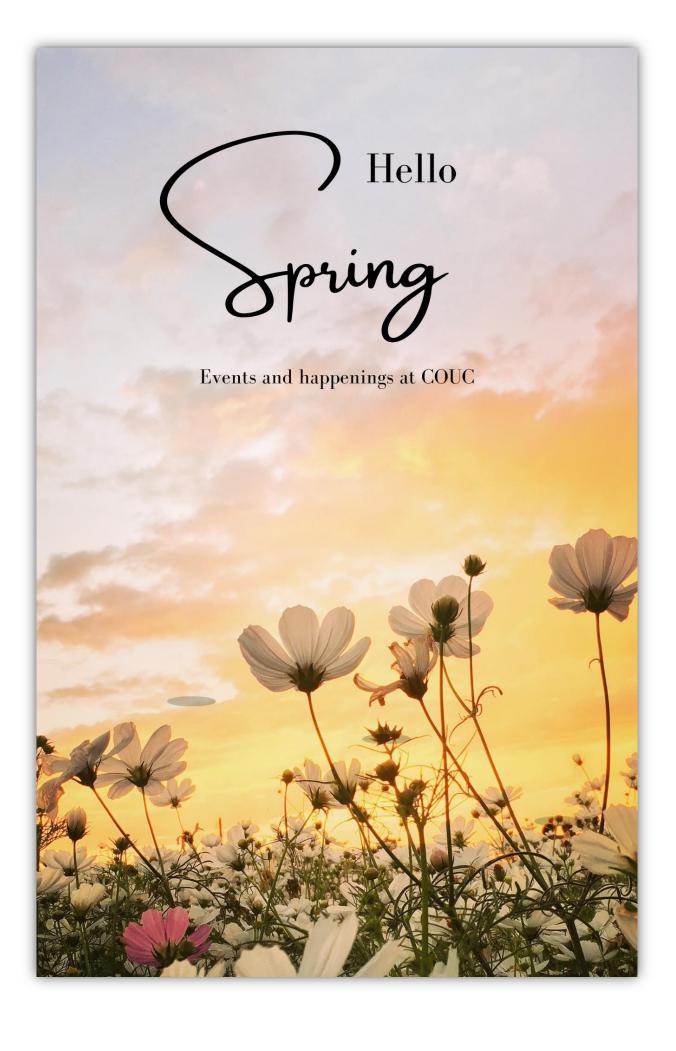


### Property & Building

 $\rightarrow$  UPDATE

Conversations are happening. COUC board members and other members of the congregation are having conversations with potential building partners (we cannot do this alone) and expect to have some preliminary results to report soon. We are hopeful, optimistic and energized!







#### YOUR FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE IS DELIGHTED TO PRESENT:

EASTER DINNER WITH HAM AND SCALLOPED POTATOES, SALAD AND DESSERT.

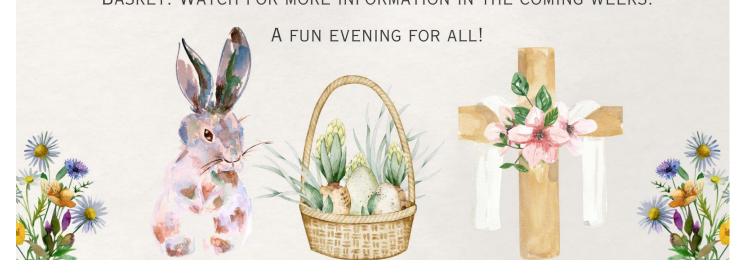
THERE WILL ALSO BE AN AUCTION OF EASTER BASKETS, MUSIC AND

ENTERTAINMENT - PLUS CHOCOLATE, OF COURSE!

THE COST WILL BE \$20.00 PER PERSON AND \$75.00 FOR A FAMILY.

PUT YOUR THINKING CAPS ON TO START MAKING PLANS FOR AN EASTER

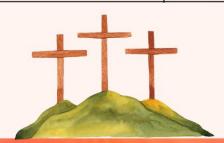
BASKET. WATCH FOR MORE INFORMATION IN THE COMING WEEKS.





## SCHEDULE

March 24th @ 10am	PALM SUNDAY Intergenerational Worship
March 28th @ 7pm	MAUNDY THURSDAY Taize Worship Service
March 29th @ 10am	GOOD FRIDAY Worship Service
March 31st @ 8am	EASTER SUNDAY Sunrise Service in Bernard Courtyard
March 31st @ 10am	EASTER SUNDAY Easter Celebration (Potluck Cancelled)
April 1st, Easter Monday	OFFICE CLOSED



#### **Remit One**

What is a Remit? It is the way we change the way we do things in the United Church of Canada. By voting on a proposal, or 'Remit'. Some Remits require every faith community to cast a vote. Because the 'church' is suspicious of change, our rules say that those who don't vote, count as 'no' votes, or votes against. In the case of Remit One, votes not cast by the end of March, will be counted as 'no' votes.

Remit One asks every faith community to vote on whether or not Indigenous Faith Communities in the United Church of Canada can decide their own structure without the oversite of the rest of the church. We made major structural changes a few years ago and told the Indigenous Faith Communities how they were going to participate within the new structure.

Indigenous Faith Communities and councils have given a lot of consideration to the new structure and the way they were engaged within it. The systems and processes seem to work well in a colonial structure, but not very well in a decolonized, Indigenous way of doing things. They have asked the United Church of Canada (all other faith communities) to give them the right to make structural changes that suit their communities without having to get our approval. They are asking for our trust and our confidence. A 'yes' vote on Remit One will grant that.

We will present information about Remit One during the service on March 3rd and host a Question and Answer session immediately after the service. Please join us, either in person or on line

More information can be found here (bureaucratic background): <a href="https://generalcouncil44.ca/sites/default/files/2023-03/gc44-remit-1-study-guide-march-2023.pdf">https://generalcouncil44.ca/sites/default/files/2023-03/gc44-remit-1-study-guide-march-2023.pdf</a>

and here (narrative, timeline and video): <a href="https://ca.video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-trp-001&ei=UTF-8&hsimp=yhs-">https://ca.video.search.yahoo.com/yhs/search?fr=yhs-trp-001&ei=UTF-8&hsimp=yhs-</a>

<u>001&hspart=trp&p=united+church+of+canada+remit+one+video&type=Y143 F163 225899 02222</u> 4#id=9&vid=1c62d0fc4f94d7d983de3565143b2267&action=click"

Blessings,

Keith Simmonds
Community Minister
Central Okanagan United Church
236 970 9000





"Come and find the quiet centre in the crowded life we lead Find the room for hope to enter, find the frame where we are freed Clear the chaos and the clutter.

Clear our eyes that we can see all the things that really matter

Be at peace and simply be."

~ Shirley Erena Murray

# Walking the Labyrinth

It can help us calm our thoughts; focus on what's important; offer clarity of thinking; provide a method of reflecting on our life journey; guide us into next steps; and draw us closer to an intimate relationship with The Holy.

Some move slowly, some rush, some dance and others simply follow the path using our eyes. How ever we choose to journey through the path, we are sure to be gifted with a holy experience.

Wednesday Mornings, our labyrinth will be open for quiet contemplation on a weekly basis. Come and find the quiet center.

7:30-8:30am

All Welcome!





#### Meetings:

In person in Room 14 - Second Wednesday of the month @3:00pm-4:30pm

Hosted By: Rev. Ivy Thomas.

Next Meeting: March 13th. Our topic will be:

What about giving everything you own to the poor?

How much is "our share"?

RSVP TO TANYA: Tanyap@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

If you have a question or thought you wish to explore,
please include that in your registration
or bring it with you to the gathering
At the end of each gathering we will randomly choose one of the submitted questions for our next discussion.



Need more information? Contact any member of the Stewardship Team: Terry Welsh, Beryl Itani, Judy Valks and Sharon Pendleton.



Scan QR Code to Donate or Read on for How to Give

#### Pre-Authorized Remittance (PAR)



Specify the amount of monthly donation to be deducted from your chequing account. Contact the office to join PAR or make changes to your current PAR contributions.

Please contact Marg Brooks: contributions@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

#### Cheques & E-Transfers

Please make out cheques to Central Okanagan United Church, and place in one of the offering offertory boxes in the sanctuary, drop off at 721 Bernard, or mail to:

> Central Okanagan United Church PO Box 24042 Kelowna, BC V1Y 9H2



E-transfer your donation to finance@centralokanaganunitedchurch.com



#### Donation of Shares

Contact our office for information to receive the appropriate form.

#### Bequests or Memorial Gifts

Include Central Okanagan United Church in your will or make a gift in memory of an individual.

Thank you for your generous and continued support!







#### **Fee Tax Clinics**

Once again this tax season we will have our four wonderful volunteers (Henriette, Suzan, Barbara and Patricia) available every Thursday morning in March and April in the hall to help low income Canadians complete their tax returns and get their much-needed refunds. This service is provided on a first-come, first-served basis and no appointment is required. If you know of anyone who might be in need of this service, please have them contact the church or just stop in on a Thursday morning. Our kitchen volunteers will once again be offering coffee and cookies to those waiting in line.

#### FoodSafe Level 1 Training

On Saturday, February 24th, we had 14 COUC individuals attend an all-day training session for FoodSafe Level 1. It was very encouraging to see such a turnout and everyone passed the course. Whenever we are preparing and serving meals from the kitchen (Tuesday mornings, potlucks, special events, etc.) Interior Health requires that we have at least one person in the kitchen who has had this training. We want to thank those who participated in the program and, for those who could not make it this time, we hope to offer another session in the spring or summer.

#### **Tuesday Mornings**

Our regular Tuesday mornings continue to be busy as we serve meals to about 70 people and provide groceries for 60 plus individuals each week. We expect March to be just as busy and we hope to offer a special meal on the Tuesday before Easter.

We are so grateful for all the contributions that come our way whether monetary or goods for the food pantry or sandwiches or hot food for the meals. We are also extremely grateful for the many volunteers who work tirelessly every week to make this much-needed program possible for the community.

The following items are what we offer to our guests weekly and if you can contribute any of these items it would be greatly appreciated.

Canned fruit, vegetables, chilli, tuna, ham, chicken, soups, beans, and Chef Boyardee meat pastas Cereal, oatmeal packets, fruit cups, pasta, pasta sauce, crackers, peanut butter, coffee, sugar, mac & cheese, Mr. Noodle, granola bars

And of course, the ever-popular toilet paper

Anyone wishing to get involved please contact Jayne Brooks 250-762-9606 or email k.jaynebrooks@gmail.com





#### HIGHLIGHTS OF THE FEBRUARY 28 BOARD MEETING

Co-chair Terry Welsh reported on two meetings that the Planning Task Team held recently with the Metis Community Services Society regarding their interest in leasing COUC property on Fitzpatrick Road in Rutland for the purpose of constructing housing, noting that B.C. Housing may be prepared to fund a feasibility study. We will also explore with the owners of the daycare currently leasing the church facility to determine how we might accommodate their needs. We have also met with the Nixon Group, who specialise in the redevelopment of heritage buildings, to determine if we have sufficient interests in common to work together on plans for the Bernard site. Further discussions will occur with the Kelowna music school regarding the Bernard site and with UBCO and OC about possibilities of partnering at the Fitzpatrick site.

Pat Totton has agreed to assist with our Pastoral Care ministry for the next four months in Cheryl Perry's absence, and Phillip Breden's appointment will be extended by one month to May 31, 2024 subject to final approval by the Pacific Mountain Region.

The Annual Congregational Meeting is scheduled for April 7, 2024 following the worship service. The Board will recommend to the congregation that a Development Fund of \$1 million be established to enable COUC to implement its approved Ministry Plan, which calls for the continuation and expansion of our various ministries over the next three years. The fund would be drawn down to recover budget deficits while the existing pool of investments would remain intact as it was prior to the amalgamation with Westbank United Church.

The Finance Committee reported that the transfer of assets from WUC to COUC had been completed with our receipt of \$1,116,273 from the Pacific Mountain Region which they had been holding in trust.

Our external accountant has completed her review of our financial records for 2023 and submitted a draft report including an income statement and balance sheet. This work was complicated by the amalgamation with WUC on October 1, 2023, as their results for the year were incorporated with COUCs. The draft report was received by the Board and will be included in the church's annual report. The Board also approved a proposed budget for 2024 which will be forwarded to the congregation for final approval.

The next Board meeting on March 27 will consider draft terms of reference for the Central Okanagan Refugee Committee and a United Church of Canada remit regarding the establishment of an indigenous united church.

# KELOWNA TOWN HALL on Climate Action



Join the discussion and share your ideas on shaping our net-zero future and mobilizing climate action

Monday March 4th, 2024 6:15pm - 7:45pm

Kelowna Public Library Downtown branch Classroom 1 (1380 Ellis Street)

**RSVP HERE** 



kelownaclimatecoalition.ca





#### **Need Help With Your Taxes?**

Free Tax Preparation at two locations.

#### Two Locations 👃



#### **Central Okanagan United Church** 721 Bernard Ave Kelowna, BC (Entry from parking lot)

Thursday mornings 9 AM to 12 PM (March & April)

#### **Rutland Senior Centre** 765 Dodd Rd. Kelowna, BC

Monday mornings 9 AM to 12 PM in March & April (except March 25th)

#### First Come First Serve No Appointment Needed.

- For Canadian residents who have low to modest income and simple returns - as outlined by the Government of Canada.
- Bring your social insurance number and government issued photo ID such as BC Drivers License, BC ID card, Status Card.
- For preparation of current tax year returns & e-fileable returns for prior years.
- Non-English speakers please bring a translator.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION







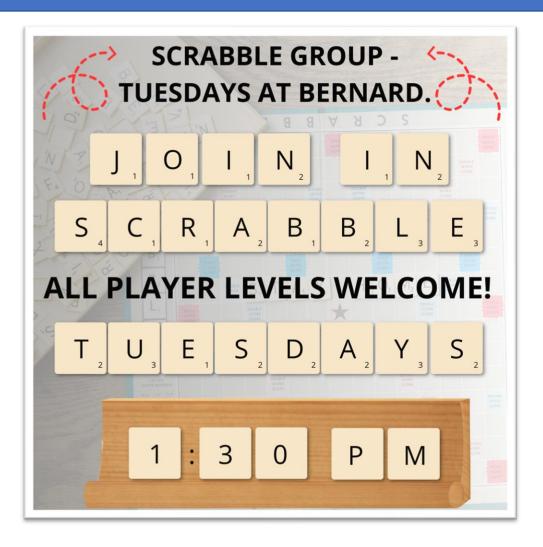


### Strengthening Voices. Inspiring Possibility. WHERE VOICES COME TO LIFE

Welcome to *SongShine*, vocal music and creative drama-based classes designed for those who have communication issues due to Parkinson's, stroke, other neurological challenges, or aging. Our goal is to help you communicate more easily and clearly. *SongShine* harnesses the power of brain, breath, and emotion to reclaim voices. It creates community, camaraderie, and confidence ...AND IT'S FUN!

Meet: Mondays at 1pm, at Bernard Church, in Room 14

**Hosted by Choir Director Sylvia Clerke** 







#### March 15th - 17th 2024

A 3-DAY FESTIVAL IN CELEBRATION OF COMMUNITY AND CULTURE, CENTERED AROUND THE SPRING EQUINOX.

In many Indigenous communities across Turtle Island, springtime is the season of new growth and awakening. Join us for a weekend of gathering, feasting and festivities to celebrate the Spring equinox.

Hosted by Global Citizen Events.

#### Poetry and Open Mike - Friday, March 15

7:00 – 9:00 pm

Location: Metro Hub – 1265 Ellis Street, Kelowna

The evening will feature poetry and open mic along with the drumming of the Women of Turtle Island. Bannock and Tea will be served. Cash donations will be accepted for the bannock and tea with all donations going to support the Elder's program at Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society. Register for tickets for March 15 by clicking on this link.

#### Community Showcase - Saturday, March 16

10:00 am to 3:00 pm

Location: Mamawapowin Early Years Centre – 1580 Bernard Avenue, Kelowna

During the day, you will have an opportunity to learn from Indigenous cultural carriers, elders and youth about ceremony, wellness, harmony and relationship building. The afternoon program includes the facilitation of Medicine Wheel Teachings with a craft suitable for all ages (multi-level). We will end the event in ceremony and prayer.

Register for tickets for March 16 by clicking on this link.

#### Fireside Stories and S'mores - Sunday, March 17

2:00 to 4:00 pm

Location: To be confirmed.

We will gather round the fire for hot chocolate, s'mores, music and stories. Lawn chairs and blankets recommended. Dress weather appropriate. The hot chocolate and s'mores will be by cash donation to support the Elder's program at Ki-Low-Na Friendship Society.

Register for tickets for March 17 by clicking on this link.

For more information reach out to <a href="ReconciliACTION2024@gmail.com">ReconciliACTION2024@gmail.com</a>

## Wreckonciliation Opera Kelowna March 14 and 16, 7:30pm

"Wreckonciliation is a musical response to the last decade of learning, striving, and failing to reckon with Canada's colonial past. The opera weaves together the deeply and serious and fully comical, and they break into song whenever the words are not enough."

Join co-creators and performers Marion Newman of Kwagiulth and Sto:lo First Nations, English, Irish and Scottish heritage; Métis Melody Courage; director Yvette Nolan, Algonquin; and Opera Canada for this lively production.

For groups of more than 10, a 10% discount is available when booked under one reservation.

Contact the Box Office at 250-717-5304 for more ticket information.

And for more information about Wreckonciliation, check out the link - <a href="https://www.operakelowna.com/production/wreckonciliation">https://www.operakelowna.com/production/wreckonciliation</a> 2024





CENTRAL OKANAGAN UNITED CHURCH IS
PROUDLY A CHRISTIAN PLACE OF BELONGING
FOR EVERY PERSON, WHERE DIVERSE FAMILY
STRUCTURE, GENDERS, CULTURES, FAITHS AND
SEXUAL ORIENTATIONS ARE
CELEBRATED AND TREASURED!





## Keep up to date, watch worship videos and more. Find us online! Like and Follow us on Facebook & Subscribe to our YouTube Channel!

#### Website

https://centralokanaganunitedchurch.com

#### Facebook Page SUNDAY LIVESTREAM SHOWN HERE

https://www.facebook.com/Centralokanaganunitedchurchkelownabc

Facebook Group (Our Private Church Group)
(A Private Group for members & friends of COUC to share church news or discussion)
<a href="https://www.facebook.com/groups/319967703235745">https://www.facebook.com/groups/319967703235745</a>

United Church of Canada Private Group – Join in for all UCC chat & news!

https://www.facebook.com/groups/UnitedChurchCda/permalink/10167795547890401/

YouTube Channel (Worship videos posted weekly): <a href="https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJRqGV1Zra36gbm1jSlks1w">https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCJRqGV1Zra36gbm1jSlks1w</a>



